

**We're fierce. We create the deeper changes we need in our community. We're focused. We use our resources effectively and with our bigger goals in mind. We're foundational. We value our partnerships and we get the work done. We are YWCA Kalamazoo.**

peace

justice

**2021 ANNUAL REPORT**

eliminating racism  
empowering women

**ywca**

Kalamazoo

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**2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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eliminating racism  
empowering women

**ywca**



REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM FOR ALL  
**TRUST WOMEN**  
NARAL  
Pro-choice women

CLIMATE IS OUR MISSION  
ELIMINATING RACISM

eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**

YWCA IS OUR MISSION TO  
STAND UP FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

CLIMATE IS OUR MISSION  
STAND UP FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

**YWCA IS OUR MISSION**



## **YWCA Kalamazoo has never waited patiently for change.**

We are a public health organization focused on social justice and providing services for vulnerable communities in Kalamazoo.

We operate at the intersection of racial and gender equity, creating new partnerships, programs, funds, and impact to directly and immediately accomplish change.

## We leverage the power of partnership.

YWCA Kalamazoo uses its foundational position in the community to be a coalition catalyst. By bringing together the populations we serve, like-minded organizations, academic experts, government entities, elected officials, and funders, we are able to achieve remarkable, sustainable solutions through advocacy and systems change.





## **We fiercely and comprehensively support equitable opportunity for mothers and children.**

Our approach is innovative and holistic. Beginning with prenatal care, healthy births, and reducing infant mortality, we give mothers, birthing parents, and babies the start they deserve. We support them in our affordable, trauma-informed childcare centers, while also training community members to be effective childcare providers. And we create safe spaces for women and children free from violence, coupled with comprehensive services such as therapy, legal service, and opportunities for economic advancement.





## **Founded in 1885. Built for today's Kalamazoo.**

YWCA's across the country share a mission: Eliminating racism. Empowering Women. In Kalamazoo, we pursue that mission by addressing the social determinants of health. We understand that racism is a public health crisis.

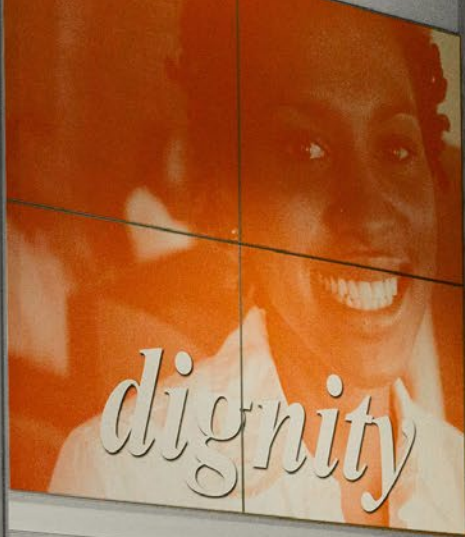
When the need grows, we grow. When policy isn't inclusive, we transform it. When the community is at risk, we step in with new support. When racism rears its head, we are champions for an anti-racist community.

Join us in our fierce, focused fight to expand the foundations of racial and gender equity in Kalamazoo.





freedom



dignity

eliminating racism  
empowering women  
ywca





# To Our YWCA Supporters,

For many non-profit or cause-based organizations, simply doing what is expected to keep the community afloat may be enough. This is not the case for YWCA Kalamazoo. Our impact is most evident when the community is no longer hurting. We are moved when people aren't under attack for living an authentic life. We are moved when every barrier has been removed so that even those with vulnerable, intersecting identities can still live equitable and empowered lives.

From the rise of gun violence to the struggle for accessible, comprehensive reproductive health care, it's no secret that BIPOC, undocumented communities, LGBTQIA+, and low-income individuals in our community are under attack. Nevertheless, to be clear, violent systems of oppression do not operate in a vacuum.

The steady rise in gun violence in our community is pervasive and multifaceted as it indirectly connects to domestic abuse and intimate partner violence.

This propels our mission to have an intentional and informed approach to our services and programmatic efforts. We deliberately operate at the intersections of race and gender to critically and accurately address these issues head-on.

While 2021 was challenging, our mission was evident in the staff, volunteers, and stakeholders' launch, expansion, and innovative programmatic efforts.

Take a second. Take a deep breath. Be proud of all we accomplished by amplifying voices, creating spaces, and intentionally showing up for the people of Kalamazoo. And gear up for the next wave as we move diligently and steadily to remove other barriers blocking our community from being one of justice, equity, and liberty.

Your unwavering commitment to our mission, vision, and values is vital to the continued growth and development of the Kalamazoo community. Be proud of the work that has been done, and remain engaged as we move diligently to eliminate racism and empower our communities.

In solidarity, solace, and perseverance,

DR. GRACE LUBWAMA, CEO

## 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. This year, YWCA Kalamazoo purchased three homes to close a gap in **transitional housing for needy families**.
2. We prioritized **eliminating financial and transportation barriers** to increase access to abortion services, doula care, and gender-affirming care, as well as on-site access to emergency contraception kits through the launch of the **Reproductive Health Fund**.
3. Our newly branded childcare center, **The Dreamery**, expanded to a second site in the Edison neighborhood in an effort to provide around-the-clock quality care for parents working first, second and third shifts.



## FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

**Dr. Grace Lubwama is a visionary trailblazer who has led YWCA Kalamazoo with strategic thought, steadfast dedication to our mission, and purposeful action. Her tenure as our CEO began in February 2014. Since then, Dr. Lubwama has transformed and elevated our organization to reach its full potential so much that other organizations have turned to YWCA Kalamazoo for guidance and leadership, both on local and national levels.**

The movement that Dr. Lubwama created around racial and gender justice, caring for victims of abuse, providing 24/7 high-quality childcare, and addressing disparate infant mortality issues head-on—is the standard of excellence. As a visionary leader and the first Black woman to serve as CEO of YWCA Kalamazoo, Dr. Lubwama works to address issues of inequity strategically in the long term.

2021 brought us many challenges as a nation. First, we witnessed increased social uprisings, led by primarily Black people, Indigenous people, People of Color, and LGBTQIA+ folks. Unfortunately, widespread support for these uprisings dwindled as quickly as it began; when the news cycle moved on, so did the support of many people with social and racial privilege. There is a long history of this, particularly regarding white people supporting justice and liberation for People of Color. As a phenomenal Black woman and leader, Dr. Lubwama leverages the power of YWCA Kalamazoo's Staff and Board to make the necessary, long-term commitment to advance racial and gender equity beyond moments of viral uprisings. Her leadership inspires us to be unwavering in our commitment to eliminating racism and empowering women.

Our Board of Directors is fully committed to a framework of anti-racism, incorporating it into our governance practices and examining our own biases that may impede us from being wholly engaged in our work. As a Board, we prioritize diversity and anti-racist practices. We are committed to creating a board with racial diversity and one that represents our community and the folks we serve.

It has been my true honor to serve as the Chair of the Board of Directors. Our work has just begun!

**With appreciation and immense gratitude,**



**HEATHER HAIGH, BOARD CHAIR 2020-21**







## Improving the Lives of Children

*Providing accessible high-quality early learning and childcare for families*

01.

**Every child  
deserves an  
equitable  
start in life.**





**In some of Kalamazoo's neighborhoods, nine out of 10 children are not in a high-quality early learning program. This impacts their caregiver's ability to find steady employment and pursue education, and it creates a barrier to an equitable start to their educational career.**

YWCA is on a mission to innovate and model best practices at the intersection of education and equity through the development of an effective workforce, and creating access to culturally relevant early childhood education programs.

### **Building an Effective Workforce**

The foundation of quality childcare is an effective workforce. Partnering with others, YWCA piloted the creation of The Edison Early Childhood Education Career Pathway to train and grow a workforce that is recruited from within the neighborhoods the programs are housed. The career pathway provides many supports including a learning coach, GED support, childcare, transportation, and funding for credentialing and apprenticeship programs.

### **Innovating Early Education at the Intersection of Education and Equity**

YWCA's two childcare centers – The Dreamery at Downtown and The Dreamery at Edison, provide comprehensive, trauma-informed programs that enable families to work outside of the home, while their children are safe learning and having fun. For children and families experiencing systemic violence, YWCA's early education and childcare spaces are meant to be a space of connection and inspiration where learning can occur. The Dreamery at Edison provides infant and toddler early learning programs, 2nd- and 3rd-shift childcare, and 24-hour drop-in childcare services. It is the only childcare center of its kind in Michigan.

## **EFFECTIVE WORKFORCE**

### **(DEFINITION)**

- 1. Representative of the community served.**
- 2. Shares the organizational vision and language around mission implementation.**
- 3. Is on a path to increasing academic credentials.**
- 4. Understands and recognizes trauma responses and has tools for managing them.**
- 5. Utilizes the learning environment as a classroom management and teaching tool.**

### Engaging Families in Meaningful Ways

Children exist within the context of their family. In order to support the whole child, families must be included in the learning experience of the child. The YWCA's early education and childcare centers pursue this at a fundamental level—sharing power and decision-making among all stakeholders and creating a space for everyone to feel included, valued, and represented.

### Strengthening Families Through Connections

Early childhood education is a powerful tool for removing barriers for families and increasing protective factors. Childcare intersects with many co-occurring obstacles and struggles for families in poverty. Wrap-around supports include: tuition assistance, transportation, peer connections, and systems navigation.

### Growing Food Justice

YWCA's children centers serve healthy, diverse meals and snacks to all children in our care. Through our Farm to Early Care & Education program, we source local food from farm partners and pursue food justice by creating equitable access to fresh produce, food learning through mealtime conversation, and family education on how to use fresh produce in meals at home.



“It has been an honor to be a part of Improving the Lives of Children for the last two years. **The YWCA Kalamazoo is so strategic in the way it utilizes Early Learning and Childcare** are used as a vehicle, to move mission of the YWCA forward in the movement to Eliminate Racism and Empower Women.”

– TRICIA RYAN  
Senior Director of Improving  
Lives of Children



**2021 IMPACT: BY THE NUMBERS**

**148**

children were provided high-quality, early learning childcare

**78%**

were children of color

**69.59%**

of children were provided with subsidized tuition

**PARTNERS IN THE WORK**

**15+** Local Partnerships

**5** State and National Partnerships



“I feel the YWCA is great because **they offer amazing resources and opportunities for the community in Kalamazoo**, my children have some emotional struggles and the YWCA has proved to us that they will be there for us when we need them. Their 24 hour availability makes them a great resource for parents working 2nd and 3rd shifts and even in emergencies **they’re available when you need them.**”

– YWCA PARENT







## Promoting Maternal & Child Health

*Addressing maternal and child racial disparities with evidence-based programs*

02.

**Every baby  
deserves  
to thrive.**





**The impact of systemic racism is increased infant mortality for black babies. In Kalamazoo County, from 2016-2018, Black infants died at 2.8 times the rate of their white neighbors. Infant mortality affects all of us because we are all a part of this community.**

YWCA's goal is for every birthing parent to have a healthy pregnancy and for every child to reach their first birthday with key developmental milestones met. Our Maternal and Child Health programs promote healthy pregnancies, positive birth outcomes, and overall well-being of infants and mothers in Kalamazoo.

### **Collaborating to Reduce Infant Mortality Disparities**

In 2014, YWCA Kalamazoo created the Kalamazoo Infant Mortality Community Action Initiative. It grew from an abstract idea into a large collaborative effort: Cradle Kalamazoo. In 2021, YWCA again became Cradle's leader in partnership with community partners, several healthcare institutions, key funding agencies, local academic institutions, multi-denominational faith-based organizations, and both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Together, we work to reduce racial disparities in infant mortality through programs focused on home visitation, health equity, and education.

### **Supporting Families with Home Visitation**

YWCA equips Kalamazoo County families with the skills and resources necessary for healthy pregnancies and raising healthy babies. Our Women and Infant Supportive Health (WISH) home visitation program provides a high-quality, culturally relevant, and evidence-informed pre-natal and post-natal curriculum—helping individuals be the best parents

they can be. Wrap-around services include goal setting and skill building, advocacy and transportation to doctor visits, one-on-one and group education, assistance meeting housing or other needs, and social support. Any pregnant or current parent with children ages 0-3 years is eligible to participate.

### **Innovating in Family Education**

In 2021, in the midst of the pandemic, YWCA Kalamazoo created the Baby Bump Program—an entirely remote, eight-week curriculum for pregnant, postpartum, and inter-conception families with children ages 0-5 years in Kalamazoo County.

Baby Bump is a guided peer support group organized around fun, hands-on activities and education related to parent health during and after pregnancy, breastfeeding, and baby safety, care, nutrition, sleep, growth, and development. Guest speakers facilitate conversations about how parents can teach, bond, and interact with their children.

**2021 IMPACT: BY THE NUMBERS**

173

clients served

21

healthy  
births

95

new  
enrollments

70%

clients who identify  
as persons of color

82

first birthdays for  
babies in the program

54

first-time  
mothers

322

participants

54

events

“One WISH client said that she has never had the opportunity to receive services from a black therapist. She was excited to be working with me because for that reason and because she knows me from the WISH program. We have had several sessions since then and she recently told me that **therapy has been a blessing in helping her control her anger.**”

– YWCA CLIENT

“**We have an opportunity to show up for every Black baby, every single time—** in a way we haven’t before. The way YWCA Kalamazoo is working to address the racial disparities in infant mortality is a huge factor in why I have joined this team!”

*Meagan Dunn*

– MEAGAN DUNN  
Vice President  
of Programs

## PARTNERS IN THE WORK

**30** Local Partnerships

**3** State and National Partnerships







## Caring for Survivors of Abuse

*Providing services for domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking victims and survivors*

03.

**We create paths  
to live without  
violence.**





**YWCA Kalamazoo provides comprehensive, free services to survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault. Our services extend from emergency response during a crisis through long-term housing. We provide therapy and advocacy, access to a full legal team, support groups, and the assurance of safety.**

### **24 Hour Crisis Line**

YWCA Kalamazoo ensures that all victims can ask for help immediately and confidentially—24 hours a day, 365 days a year. YWCA 24-hour Crisis Line is the first step on the path to escape from violence.

### **Emergency Shelter and Housing**

YWCA Kalamazoo provides free, safe shelter for victims of domestic violence and their dependent children. Food, personal needs items, clothing, and emergency transportation are included.

We also address Kalamazoo's shortage of housing for victims with our Transitional Supportive Housing Program. Providing safe residences throughout Kalamazoo, we help survivors move forward with their lives, establishing plans to build credit, start savings plans, and define achievable goals.

### **Supporting Sexual Assault Survivors**

YWCA Kalamazoo, in partnership with Bronson, is the only provider of Sexual Assault Nurse Examinations (SANE) in the county. We offer highly-trained, specialized, culturally-competent services to rape victims and survivors through a medical forensic examination done in a non-hospital environment, on-site at YWCA Kalamazoo.

YWCA Kalamazoo also works in partnership with the prosecutor's office through the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI). Kalamazoo was considered a hot spot for rape kits that were backlogged and not tested. Now that those tests are being processed, we provide support to the survivors.

### **Sheltering Human Trafficking Survivors**

YWCA Kalamazoo opened the first shelter in Michigan for labor and sex trafficking survivors including women, men, gender non-conforming people, and non-offending family members. We provide supportive services including legal, advocacy, case management, and therapy.



“Being a Senior Director in Victim Services means that I get to support an entire team of incredibly talented and passionate individuals who give their all to the clients we serve every single day. Through my work with them, I like to think **I still have an impact on survivors’ lives by helping to create and improve client-centered programming, policy, and system change.**”

– MICHELLE BUTKIEWICZ  
Senior Director  
of Victim Services



## 2021 IMPACT: BY THE NUMBERS

568

clients supported for intimate partner violence

The pandemic required a pivot to delivering many services remotely. In 2021, we expanded and perfected the technologies put into place in 2020 – including virtual platforms for therapy and advocacy, electronic document signatures, and grant-funded tablets for staff and clients to connect to services, therapy, support groups, and court proceedings.

438

clients supported after sexual assault

47%

clients who identify as persons of color

4,440

hours of free therapeutic services to survivors of abuse

83

clients supported to protect from labor and sex trafficking

39,728

hours housing clients in our shelters

“The morning after I was raped, I confided in a close friend about what happened. **I was scared and unsure of what to do next.** I knew calling the police wouldn’t bring me the comfort I needed at that moment. My friend explained the work that YWCA Kalamazoo does for survivors, and I immediately knew that’s where I needed to go. I arrived at the YWCA with my friend that same day to undergo a rape test in case I wanted to file charges later. While the circumstances were and still are devastating, it was such a needed, positive experience during that time. **I was greeted warmly and without judgment.** The nurse examiner asked for my consent every step of the way. She explained what she needed to do and why with the utmost care. She reiterated multiple times that I was not to blame, something that seems cliché until you really need to hear and believe it. I am forever grateful for the staff who jumped into action when I arrived; it was one of the first times I’ve ever felt believed. **The work YWCA Kalamazoo does is not only life-changing, it is life-affirming.**”

– YWCA CLIENT

## PARTNERS IN THE WORK

**25+** Local Partnerships







## Advocacy & Systems Change

*Creating a just community through addressing systems that cause racial and gender disparities*

04.

**Addressing  
the systems  
that cause  
injustice.**



In addition to our direct services work, and despite the pandemic, YWCA Kalamazoo continued to work tirelessly to educate the public and influence policymakers on local, state, and national levels.

We advance racial and gender equity by ensuring that the voices of underrepresented communities are heard. We advance racial and gender equity by ensuring that the voices of underrepresented communities are heard.

Every day we mobilize our communities, transforming their voices into policy, practice, and procedures. **We shift systems, we shift institutions.**

“Serving as the Senior Director of Social Justice and Advocacy is a lifestyle. Every day it becomes more clear how **this ideology has to be embedded in our day-to-day**— even outside of work. That is how we will reach true justice.”



– **DEMETRIAS WOLVERTON**  
Senior Director of Social Justice and Advocacy



## PARTNERS IN THE WORK

**26** Local Partnerships

**10** State and National Partnerships

### 2021 IMPACT: BY THE NUMBERS

#### LOCAL, STATE, & NATIONAL PARTNERS

**36**

including the Collaborative for Gender and Reproductive Equity, National Institute for Reproductive Health, and MI Children's

#### TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

**677**  
people

**62**  
events

#### COMMUNITY EDUCATION EVENTS

**1,600**  
people

**20**  
events

on topics including sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking

#### CRADLE KALAMAZOO

**662**  
people

**20**  
events

#### PREVENTION EDUCATION

**700**  
people

**36**  
events in schools and youth organizations

**46**

engagements with elected officials

# The first of its kind in the nation: Kalamazoo Comprehensive Reproductive Health Fund

YWCA Kalamazoo launched the Reproductive Health Fund (RHF) in November 2021—the first reproductive rights health fund of its kind in the United States. The fund eliminates financial and transportation barriers to increase access to abortion services, doula care, and gender-affirming care, as well as on-site access to emergency contraception kits. The comprehensive reproductive health fund represents a large step towards reproductive justice in Kalamazoo County.

## 2021 RHF FUND USAGE HIGHLIGHTS

**40**

number of times the RHF was utilized

**70%**

RHF users are People of Color

**52%**

of RHF users are Black

**74%**

of clients have an annual income of less than \$24,000

over **\$25K**

spent providing services

**36**

total number of RHF clients

**11%**

of clients utilized the safety name feature

**50%**

of clients were unemployed

## OVERALL SERVICE USE



**50% ABORTION SERVICES**

**33% DOULA CARE**

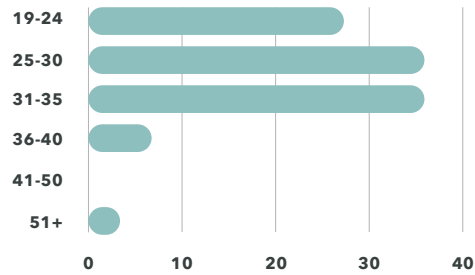
**8% TRANSPORTATION**

**3% EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION**

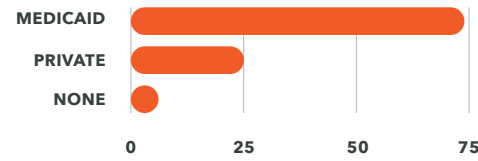
**8% GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE**



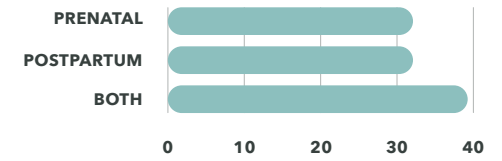
### AGE



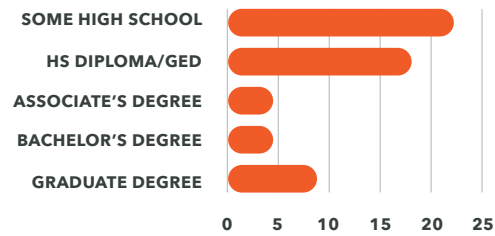
### INSURANCE



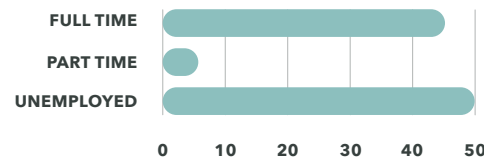
### DOULA PACKAGE USE



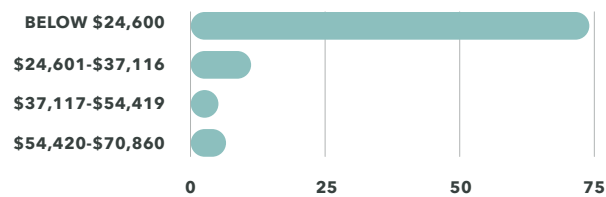
### EDUCATION



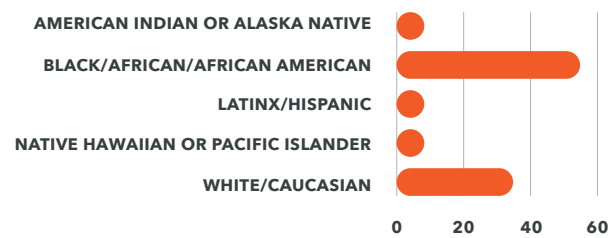
### EMPLOYMENT STATUS



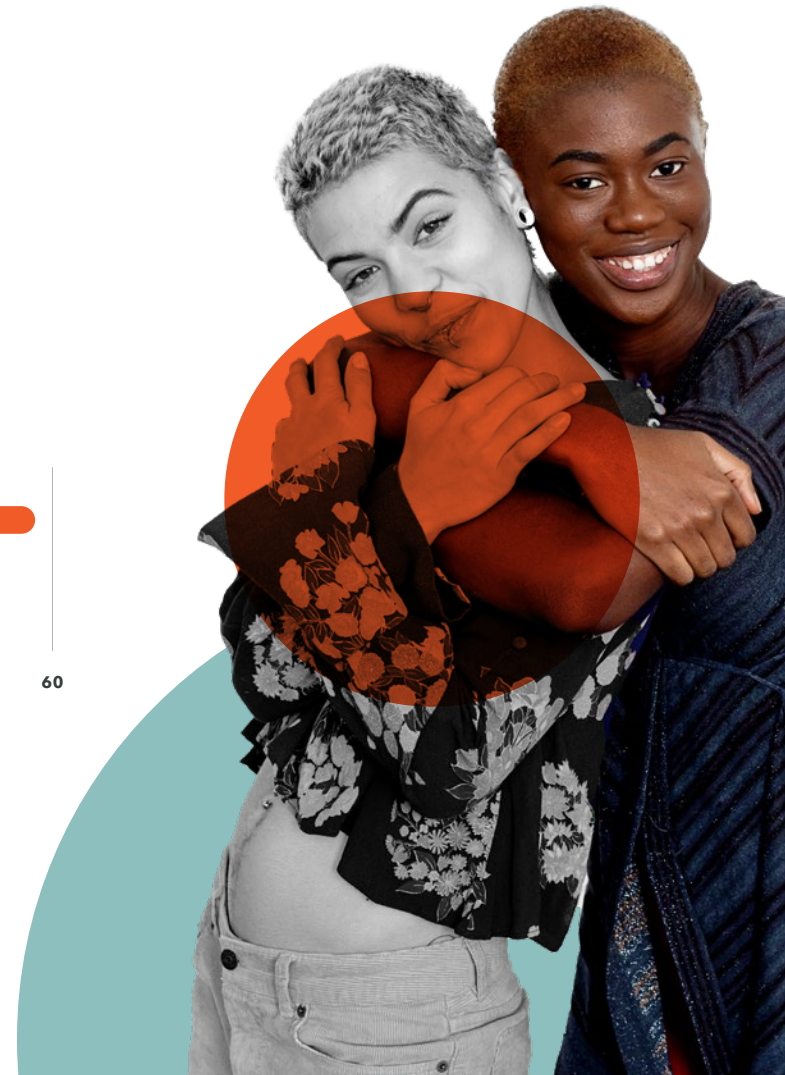
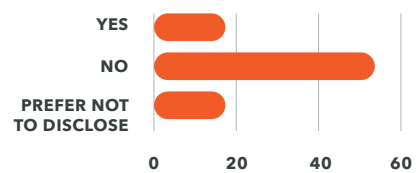
### HOUSEHOLD INCOME



### RACE / ETHNICITY

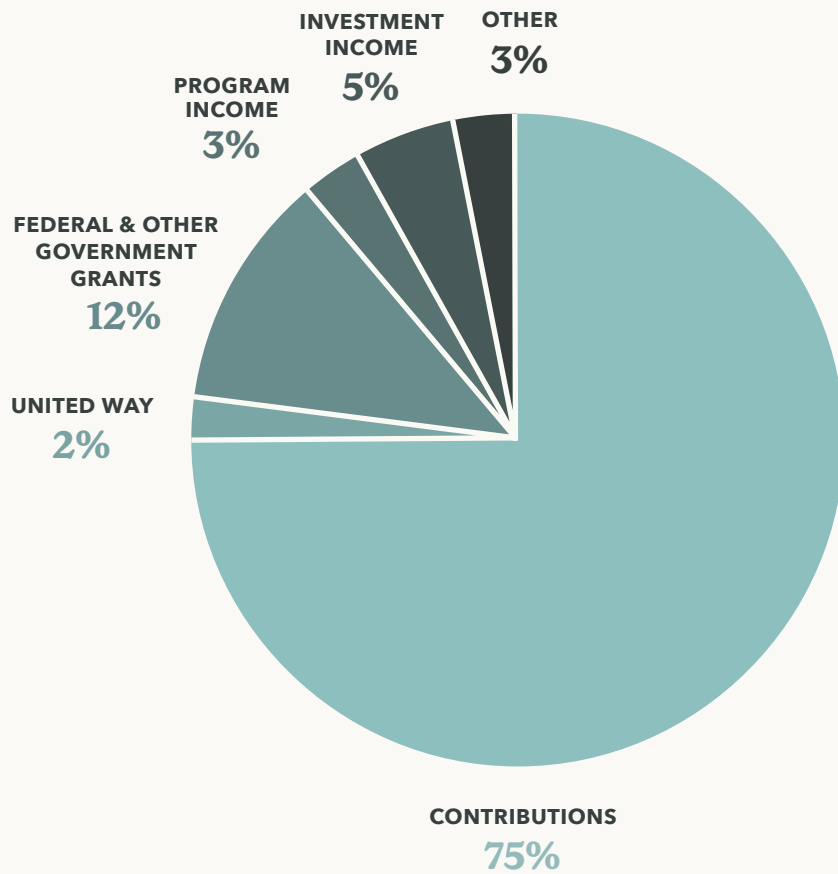


### LGBTQIA+

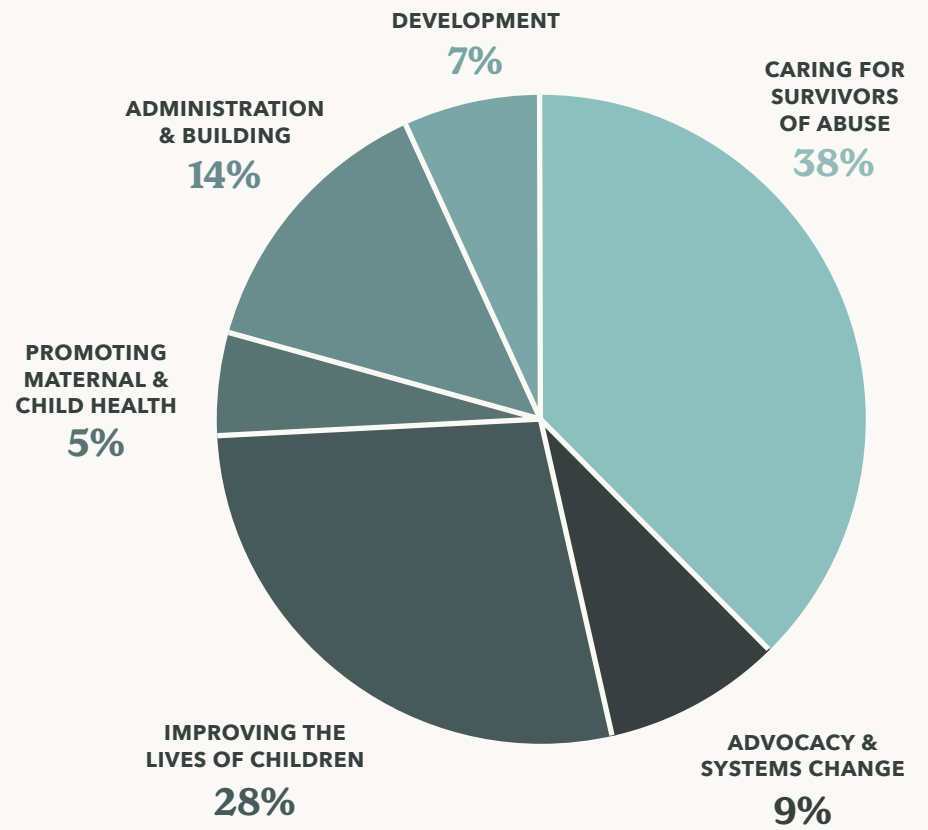


# Investing in the Mission

## TOTAL REVENUE



## TOTAL EXPENSES



# Join Our Movement



## DONATE

Your donation helps us continue to be community allies in Kalamazoo by providing services and programs for women and their families in Kalamazoo County. Consider giving to any of our strategic focus services, the Reproductive Health Fund, In-Kind donations, or a Legacy Gift.



## BECOME A MEMBER

Membership in the YWCA reflects your belief in the value of supporting a local organization that has represented women's interests since 1885 in the Kalamazoo community. It is also a cost-effective way to support vital services to children and families throughout the community.



## VOLUNTEER

Your time, talents and energy are valuable gifts, and support the women, children, and families in our community. Learn more and submit an application to see how you can help YWCA support the Kalamazoo community.



## BECOME AN INTERN

Interns get direct experience working with victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking, while gaining competencies in crisis intervention, empathy, advocacy and service programs.



## BECOME A TEAM MEMBER

YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all through racial and gender equity services and programming that serve the Kalamazoo community. Be a part of our team.



## SHARE YOUR STORY

YWCA offers great support for survivors of abuse by being a safe place to share your story, free of judgment, scrutiny, and criticism. In turn, your story can help other survivors as they navigate their own trauma. The shared experience is invaluable. Learn how you can share your story through discussion and letters of support.





Thank you for all you do!

### DONORS

We are so very proud you join us in this work. You helped us change lives by providing financial support that allowed us to be the leader in providing for marginalized populations. Our appreciation is boundless!

### SPONSORS

Your continued support through the challenges of the pandemic ensured no loss of direct services to our clients and their families. Words are not enough to express this gratitude!

### VOLUNTEERS

While we were limited in how we could engage with this dedicated group in 2021, their commitments were redirected to stand in the gap and be available when the times were appropriate. We were stronger together!

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The virtual spaces created by the pandemic allowed this enthusiastic group to remain connected and involved in our work. We are forever grateful!







*dignity*

empowering  
ywca





United Way of the Battle Creek  
and Kalamazoo Region

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YWCA Kzoo



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